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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

10 May 1976

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Preparation and Conduct of an Operation by the Armed Forces in a Theater of Military Operations in the Initial Period of a War

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. This article is an analysis of NATO capabilities and intentions regarding an initial period of war in the Central European Theater of Military Operations. The author outlines steps taken in NATO preparations for and planning of operations, citing various exercises to illustrate the two stages of projected operations and the role of a nuclear offensive. Other topics reviewed include NATO measures to maintain combat readiness. This article appeared in Issue No. 2 (78) for 1966. The Russian-language version was disseminated as FIRDB-312/03695-74.

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2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies. For ease of reference, reports from this publication have been assigned [redacted] Codeword [redacted]

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): The Preparation and Conduct of an Operation by the Armed Forces in a Theater of Military Operations in the Initial Period of War

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of an article which appeared in Issue No. 2 (78) for 1966 of the SECRET USSR Ministry of Defense publication Collection of Articles of the Journal 'Military Thought'. The author of this article is Colonel S. Sokolov. This article is an analysis of NATO capabilities and intentions regarding an initial period of war in the Central European Theater of Military Operations. The author outlines steps taken in NATO preparations for and planning of operations, citing various exercises to illustrate the two stages of projected operations and the role of a nuclear offensive. Other topics reviewed include NATO measures to maintain combat readiness, the basic methods for conducting nuclear offensive operations in the initial period, the organization of cooperation between NATO army groups and tactical air forces, the operation of various command and control posts and the development of new control and communications systems.

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The SECRET version of Military Thought was published three times annually and was distributed down to the level of division commander. It reportedly ceased publication at the end of 1970. The Russian-language version of this article was disseminated as FIRDB-312/03695-74.

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The Preparation and Conduct of an Operation by the
Armed Forces in a Theater of Military
Operations in the Initial Period of War

(According to the Views of the NATO Command)

by
Colonel S. Sokolov

NATO is one of the largest and most aggressive blocs of imperialism. Operating under the influence of the US, this bloc is preparing its armed forces for an attack against the countries of the socialist commonwealth. The basic means of unleashing a war in Europe is considered to be a surprise nuclear attack.

For this purpose the main grouping of NATO missile/nuclear weapons, ground and air forces is concentrated in the Central European Theater of Military Operations. It is namely in this theater of military operations that the NATO Command intends to carry out decisive operations in the initial period of a war. It is the opinion of military leaders that the course and outcome of a world war on the whole will depend to a significant degree on the success of military operations in the Central European Theater of Military Operations.

In order for the armed forces to conduct operations in the Central European Theater of Military Operations, the NATO Command has created a grouping of allied ground and air forces consisting of two army groups (Northern and Central) and two allied tactical air forces (ATAF) (the 2nd and 4th ATAF).

On 1 April 1966 this grouping numbered 25 divisions, two separate brigades, 900 launchers of operational-tactical and tactical missiles and nuclear artillery weapons, 4,041 field artillery weapons and mortars, 6,498 tanks, and 1,480 aircraft and helicopters of the army aviation.

The air forces in this theater have 2,030 combat aircraft (of which 895 are nuclear weapons carriers).

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In the course of an operation this grouping may be strengthened by eight to nine ground forces divisions brought from the NATO countries (US, Canada, Great Britain and Belgium) and 350 to 400 tactical fighter aircraft from the continental United States.

Thus, the following average operational densities can be created in the Central European Theater of Military Operations in a zone with a width of 700 to 740 kilometers: one division per 22 kilometers of front, approximately 1.2 free rocket, guided missile and nuclear artillery launchers, nine tanks and five guns and mortars per kilometer of front.

Preparation of an operation. The preparation of an operation by the armed forces in the theater for the initial period of a war includes a great number of measures undertaken by the NATO Command, the national commands of the countries participating in the bloc, the command and staff of the armed forces in the theater and by the troops themselves for the purpose of the organization, planning and comprehensive support of the operation. Only some of these measures will be examined in this article.

First of all, the NATO Command determines the goals of the operation. On the basis of exercises conducted in recent years, these goals may be:

- to seize the strategic initiative in the center of Europe;
- to achieve nuclear superiority and air superiority;
- to defeat the main groupings of ground forces and aviation of the Warsaw Pact countries in the territory of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Poland and Czechoslovakia;
- to occupy the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Poland and create conditions for a deep penetration into the territory of the Soviet Union.

The NATO Military Command believes that under present conditions these aims may be achieved in the theater through the joint efforts of all branches of the armed forces. At the same time, it is believed that in a general nuclear war the basic means of achieving these aims is the surprise massed employment of nuclear weapons, that is, the conduct of a so-called nuclear offensive.

Planning the operation. The plans of operations by the armed forces in the theater are worked out in peacetime. They envision first of all sudden actions by the NATO armed forces. Based on the strategy of a preventive war, we may assume that one version of an operation by the armed forces in the theater, for the conditions of a general nuclear conflict initiated by NATO, is planned for two stages. The duration of the first stage will be eight to ten days and that of the second -- 12 to 15 days.

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The depth of the operation will be 1,000 to 1,200 kilometers.

The first stage of the given version of the operation may consist of: a nuclear attack, the move of ground forces to the offensive, defeat of the main grouping of the first strategic echelon of armed forces of the Warsaw Pact countries in the theater, and the capture of the territory of the GDR, the western and central parts of Czechoslovakia and bridgeheads on the eastern bank of the Oder River, for the purpose of the further development of the offensive in the territory of Poland and the eastern part of Czechoslovakia. The depth of this stage is 500 to 600 kilometers.

The second stage of the operation will be: the defeat of advancing strategic reserves, capture of the territory of Poland and the eastern part of Czechoslovakia, and the creation of conditions for carrying out a subsequent operation for the purpose of a deep penetration into the territory of the Soviet Union and establishing control in the western and central parts of the Baltic Sea.

Only the first stage of the operation has been planned in detail, while the second stage has been outlined only in general terms. Probably, the NATO Command's plan of combat actions for the second stage will depend upon the results achieved in carrying out the tasks of the first stage.

The main attention in planning the first stage of the operation under the conditions of a general war is devoted to nuclear weapons.

The practicability of the plans is tested regularly in exercises and maneuvers, but in these exercises the military command of the bloc masks its true aggressive intentions in every way possible and the situation develops in such a way that the NATO countries are always subjected to an attack from the USSR. Therefore, the exercises include the following versions:

1. The operation begins under conditions when the enemy takes the initiative in unleashing a general war, followed by massed retaliatory nuclear strikes by the NATO armed forces against the groupings and other important targets of the Warsaw Pact countries in the theater. The NATO allied ground forces will first conduct defensive and delaying actions and will move to a decisive counteroffensive on the eighth to thirteenth day of the war.

2. The operation begins with a limited war initiated by the enemy and proceeds to build up to a general nuclear war. The initiative for

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employing nuclear weapons belongs to NATO.

The first version of the operation was played out in the NATO exercises FALLEX-60, CHECKMATE, and FALLEX-62. In developing this version the NATO leaders attempted to place their armed forces in a position from which they would be prepared to conduct operations in the initial period under the most complex conditions of a general nuclear war.

The second version was played out in the GREEN LION and FALLEX-61 exercises. In checking the feasibility of this plan the NATO Command did not establish specific times for the introduction of nuclear weapons, since this was determined in the course of the operation when the attainment of the goals and tasks of the operation in the theater with the further conduct of combat actions with the employment of only conventional weapons became doubtful. In the GREEN LION exercise the armed forces in the Central European Theater of Military Operations began to employ nuclear weapons on the fourth day of the war, and in the FALLEX-64 exercise -- on the second day of the war.

The operation of the armed forces in the theater in the initial period of a war is planned for a depth of 1,000 to 1,200 kilometers primarily in two stages. The duration and form of the stages of the operations differ depending upon the conditions under which they are carried out. For example, the duration of the first stage of the operation in the FALLEX-60 and CHECKMATE exercises was 10 to 12 days.

The first stage consisted of a nuclear strike to a depth of 1,000 to 1,200 kilometers, delaying and defensive actions by the ground forces in a cover zone to a depth of up to 250 kilometers, defeat of the main groupings of enemy air, ground and naval forces in the theater, the buildup of their own groupings of air, naval and ground forces and the creation of conditions for going over to a counteroffensive.

The second stage of an operation by the armed forces in a general nuclear war may consist of the following: a move by the ground forces to a counteroffensive, the defeat of the main groupings of the first strategic echelon of Warsaw Pact armed forces in the theater, the defeat of the enemy's approaching operational and strategic reserves, and the capture of the territory of the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

On the basis of the results of the FALLEX-60 exercise, the duration of the second stage of the operation was 32 days, but this may sometimes change. The depth of the second stage may reach 1,000 to 1,200 kilometers.

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The form and duration of stages of an operation begun under conditions of a limited war which builds to a general war are somewhat different from the duration and form of stages of an operation that begins as a general war.

In the GREEN LION and FALLEX-64 exercises the first stage consisted of delaying actions by covering forces, deployment of the main ground forces, and their taking and conduct of a defense without the employment of nuclear weapons, and combat actions by the tactical aviation to achieve air superiority over the zone of combat actions. The first stage lasted two to five days.

The second stage of the operation consisted of a nuclear offensive, a defense by the main ground forces on the forward defensive lines and the destruction of the main groupings of the enemy air forces in the theater. The duration of the second stage corresponds to that of the first stage of an operation in the theater in a general nuclear war, that is, 10 to 12 days.

In the given case the third stage may consist of the movement of the ground forces to a counteroffensive, the defeat of the main groupings of armed forces in the theater and the approaching enemy operational and strategic reserves, and the capture of enemy territory to the depth of the nuclear offensive.

It is felt that operations by the armed forces in the theater may be carried out under different situational conditions, and for this reason a number of different versions of the operation may be planned.

According to the views of the NATO Command, a nuclear offensive in the theater is a component part of a general nuclear offensive conducted on a global scale. Within the limits of the theater the nuclear offensive represents the first air and missile operation employing the maximum number of nuclear weapons carriers available to the command of the theater.

The purpose of the nuclear offensive in the theater is to destroy the enemy's means of nuclear attack by delivering massed nuclear strikes, achieve nuclear superiority, take the initiative and create favorable conditions for further operations by all the branches of the armed forces.

In the opinion of the NATO Command, as a result of the nuclear offensive a new military-strategic situation and a new balance of forces will be created in the theater, making it possible for the armed forces to

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initiate large-scale offensive actions.

The NATO Command believes that the main targets of the first massed nuclear strike in the theater will be missile units, airfields and aircraft on the airfields, nuclear weapons storage areas, command posts, air defense installations, troops in areas of concentration and on the march, and the more important installations in the rear.

A nuclear offensive is planned for a depth of 1,000 to 1,200 kilometers over a period of three to five days. It may consist of two or three massed nuclear strikes with grouped or single strikes in the intervals between them. The first massed nuclear strike should be the most powerful one. It will use up to 60 to 70 percent of the nuclear warheads allotted for the offensive. The surprise of the first strike is achieved by the careful preparation of forces and means. The timely identification of enemy targets against which strikes are to be planned is exceptionally important.

The basic means of conducting the nuclear offensive is tactical and carrier-based aviation, as well as strategic aviation and intercontinental ballistic missiles. A prominent role will be assigned to the carrier strike fleet and missile-carrying nuclear submarines which will have the responsibility of striking the most important military and industrial targets of the Warsaw Pact countries.

The accompanying table shows the number of forces and means that may participate in a nuclear offensive in the Central European Theater of Military Operations.

Up to 100 to 120 or more Titan-2 and Minuteman ICBM's may be used to strike the more important targets in the depth of the Central European Theater of Military Operations under the plan for a global nuclear offensive.

The data given in the table show that a significant grouping of means capable of delivering nuclear warheads to their targets has been established for a first massed strike and a nuclear offensive in the theater. One feature that should be noted is that, of the total number of nuclear weapons carriers that may be used in a nuclear attack, ballistic missiles comprise a total of 14 percent (approximately 230 launchers).

The success that may be achieved in the employment of nuclear weapons in an operation by the armed forces in a theater in the initial period of a

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war is directly related to the advance preparation of plans for the use of nuclear weapons delivery means. Thus, the control of nuclear forces is centralized in the hands of the NATO Supreme Commander in Europe. All of the more important targets, the data on which have been collected by reconnaissance during peacetime, are listed by degree of importance in the plan of the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO Forces in Europe.

Maintaining the armed forces at a high level of combat readiness and measures used to achieve surprise. The NATO Command believes that the constant combat readiness of the troops is the most important requirement of the armed forces in the theater both in peacetime and in wartime to ensure the success of an operation in the initial period of a war.

At the present time the NATO allied armed forces have developed and are using three levels of combat readiness of the troops.

The first level is initiated at the decision of the Supreme Commander and on instructions from the ministers of defense of the NATO countries and encompasses a period lasting from several days to several weeks. During this time measures usually are undertaken for the purpose of facilitating the movement of forces to increased combat readiness.

The second level is initiated one to 36 hours before the beginning of combat actions. During this period measures are undertaken to bring the armed forces to a condition of readiness to conduct combat actions.

The third level is initiated several minutes before an enemy attack or at the time the attack occurs.

The measures taken at this time have the purpose of protecting the armed forces and particularly the means of nuclear attack against destruction by the first nuclear strike of the enemy.

The NATO Air Defense Command has developed and is using measures to maintain a constant combat readiness of air defense forces and means to immediately repulse an enemy air attack. At the present time all air defense squadrons and surface-to-air guided missile battalions are operating at 100 percent wartime strength. Aircraft and crews are divided into forces on alert and combat-ready forces depending upon their level of readiness. The forces on alert include aircraft and crews, and sometimes subunits and units, which would require a minimum amount of time, counted in minutes, to prepare for actions. The combat-ready forces are given a longer period of time, but not exceeding two to three hours, to prepare for

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actions.

The strategic aviation of the US, Great Britain and France as well as the tactical aviation of the 2nd and 4th ATAF are in a status in which at least 70 percent of the organic aircraft are constantly ready for flight. These aircraft are called combat-ready. Some of them are in an increased level of combat readiness, that is, they are on alert status on the ground and in the air. The NATO Command maintains in alert status at its airfields up to 15 percent of its combat-ready delivery aircraft with nuclear weapons on board and up to 10 percent of the remaining tactical aviation forces. The forces on alert may be used within 15 to 20 minutes after receiving the order for a combat sortie. The targets of strikes are known to all crews.

According to their views, there are different ways of achieving surprise in a first strike. For example, it is believed that surprise may be achieved by the previously planned national training of the armed forces disguised as day-to-day activities as well as exercises and maneuvers with the gradual buildup of the level of readiness for a war.

The first strike may be timed for the beginning of large-scale maneuvers or conducted in the course of such maneuvers when the armed forces deployed in the theater to participate in them are at their highest level of combat readiness.

For purposes of camouflage, all measures taken to prepare for a surprise attack may be presented as purely defensive measures under the pretext of preparations for a retaliatory attack.

The conduct of an operation by armed forces in a theater of military operations in the initial period of a war depends to a significant extent on the way in which it is initiated. The basic methods for this in the initial period of a war may be:

- the sudden unleashing of a general nuclear war;
- the unleashing of a limited war which is carried out with conventional weapons in a situation which builds up subsequently to a general nuclear war.

Conducting a nuclear offensive. All NATO forces and means begin automatically to carry out plans for a nuclear attack upon receipt of an announcement by the NATO Supreme Commander in Europe of the decision to employ nuclear weapons.

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Nuclear strikes are planned for delivery first of all against targets designated in the plan of the NATO Supreme Commander in Europe and the priority regional plans of the commanders-in-chief in the theaters of military operations. Nuclear strikes are delivered automatically against these targets in strict accordance with a timetable plan. It is presumed that the plan of the Supreme Commander will be carried out fully within 12 to 24 hours after the start of a nuclear offensive, while the priority regional plans for the theaters of military operations will be completed by the end of the second day of the war.

The results of exercises by armed forces in the theater show that about 85 percent of the nuclear warheads to be allocated for a nuclear attack are employed at present by aviation. Different classes of missiles supplement the aviation.

The take-off and actions of aviation as well as the launching of ballistic missiles by the ground forces during a first strike in a general nuclear war will be carried out with the aim of achieving surprise and conserving forces and means, probably immediately following the launching of strategic ballistic missiles according to a unified plan for a global nuclear offensive.

The second massed nuclear strike may be made eight to 12 hours after the first, while the third may be made one or two days after the second. A nuclear offensive in the theater may also take other forms.

The NATO Command, by carrying out a nuclear offensive, aims at destroying the missile/nuclear means, and aviation and ground forces groupings of the first strategic echelon, achieving nuclear superiority and superiority in the air, isolating the area of combat actions from the approach of fresh reserves, prohibiting the maneuvering of armed forces groupings both within the theater and from the enemy depth, neutralizing the air defense system, and disrupting control.

According to the views of the NATO Command, at the start of a nuclear offensive and during the offensive the ground forces in the theater will carry out offensive actions, defensive or delaying actions, depending upon the specific situation which develops.

Thus, under the conditions of a general nuclear war an operation by the armed forces in the theater in the initial period of the war will begin with the first massed nuclear strike by tactical aviation and operational-tactical missiles, coordinated with nuclear strikes by

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strategic missiles and actions by carrier-based and strategic aviation.

The movement of ground forces to the offensive and the conduct of offensive operations. The conditions under which the ground forces in a theater will go over to the offensive largely depend on the results of the first massed strike of the nuclear offensive and the nature of the enemy's actions in unleashing the war.

It is felt that the most favorable conditions for conducting offensive operations may be created by a sudden powerful missile/nuclear strike to the entire depth of the enemy's disposition, as a result of which, according to the estimate of the NATO Command, the main groupings of the ground forces and the main forces of the aviation in the first strategic echelon of the Warsaw Pact countries will be routed. Under such conditions the offensive operation may be developed in accordance with the plan which has been worked out in peacetime.

According to the views of the NATO Command, the troops may go over to the offensive from a position of close contact with the enemy, from areas of concentration or from the march.

The first method obviously will find broader application when offensive actions are carried out in the course of an operation, while the second and third will be used primarily at the beginning of combat actions. It is not impossible that all three methods will be used to a greater or lesser extent both in the initial period and in the course of an operation.

The ground forces may go over to the offensive either immediately following the first nuclear strike (when they have been moved to the border in advance and have occupied their departure areas for the offensive) or within a certain period of time (up to four hours or more) after the start of the strike, when the forces will go over to the offensive from their permanent deployment areas or areas of concentration which are a considerable distance from the state border.

In the course of an offensive operation, particularly in its initial period, there is the possibility that the forces will switch to defensive actions on some axes, as a result of which it is assumed that following the massed employment of nuclear weapons the balance of forces will change to their favor and they may then move to a decisive offensive.

On the basis of exercises conducted by NATO, the operational disposition of the ground forces in the Central European Theater of

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Military Operations will have one echelon consisting of 24 to 25 divisions; the reserve of the commander-in-chief in the theater will number eight to nine divisions located at a depth of 200 to 300 kilometers. At the same time the army groups may also have a one-echelon structure and a reserve consisting of three to four divisions each.

The main strike of the Northern Army Group will be carried out on the Hannover-Stendal axis. The width of the offensive zone will be 220 to 240 kilometers. The axis for the Central Army Group will be Eisenach-Berlin with an auxiliary axis to Prague. The width of the zone of the offensive will be up to 480 kilometers. The depth of the operations of the army groups may reach 400 to 500 kilometers or more. It is possible that other axes may be selected for the main strike.

An army group will be allocated up to 500 to 600 nuclear warheads for an operation.

In all cases it is expected that fire support by the troops' organic nuclear weapons or so-called nuclear preparation will be employed to ensure the deployment of the troops and their going over to an offensive. This may be a component of the nuclear offensive. It presumably will be initiated suddenly, on a massive scale and for a limited period of time in conjunction with preparatory fire by conventional weapons and with aviation actions as well as with the wide-scale use of chemical weapons. The troops will go over to the offensive immediately following the nuclear preparation, attempting to take advantage of the results of the nuclear strikes.

According to the views of the NATO Command, meeting engagements may occur at the beginning of an offensive operation when both sides mount an offensive, and in the course of the operation when combating the advancing enemy operational and strategic reserves, as well as when delivering counterstrikes. It is believed that meeting engagements may take place on several axes. It is expected that the enemy will be defeated simultaneously on all axes or successively. If a meeting engagement develops unfavorably on a particular axis, it is expected that the troops will go over to the defense for the purpose of stopping the enemy, weakening his forces and then going over to the offensive.

The main stake in a meeting engagement will be the nuclear and chemical weapons employed by the ground forces and tactical aviation in conjunction with aggressive and decisive actions by the troops on the offensive.

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The efforts of the troops on the offensive will be augmented in the depth through the commitment to the engagement of reserves of the army groups and those of the theater, usually upon completion of the tasks of the first stage of the operation of the army groups to a depth of 150 to 200 kilometers for the development of the offensive, as a rule, on the axis of the main strike of an army group. Sometimes the reserves of an army group in a theater may be used to repulse an enemy counterstrike or to rout an enemy counterstrike grouping. According to the results of exercises and maneuvers, the average rate of advance was 40 to 50 kilometers per day.

It is planned that an offensive operation in a theater of military operations will include the drop (landing) of airborne landing forces of up to one airborne division and sometimes more. The drop will be carried out in the course of the offensive operation, usually on the axis of the main strike at a depth of up to 200 kilometers or more.

It is not expected that large amphibious landings will be made in the course of an offensive operation in the Central European Theater of Military Operations due to the absence of a sufficient number of naval forces and the complexity of the situation in the Baltic Sea zone.

The organization of cooperation between army groups. The NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe organizes cooperation between the allied armed forces and adjacent theaters of military operations during operations in the initial period of a war. The specific actions of the troops on the flanks are coordinated with respect to both time and the tasks being carried out. For this purpose a part of the forces, particularly those of aviation, are allocated for actions in an adjacent theater.

Within a theater of military operations the commander-in-chief of the allied armed forces in the theater organizes cooperation between the army groups and the ATAF. In this case the matters of providing cover to flanks and boundaries and the actions by part of the forces in the zones of responsibility of the adjacent forces also are coordinated. In particular, the Northern Army Group and the 2nd ATAF have the assignment of supporting NATO troops in Jutland and naval forces in the area of the Baltic Straits, covering the left flank of the Central Army Group and being ready to offer support to the 4th ATAF as well as assisting the national commands in routing enemy airborne (amphibious) landing forces which have landed in the zone of the lines of communication.

The Central Army Group and the 4th ATAF will ensure the cooperation of the armed forces along the boundary between the Central European and

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Southern European theaters on the basis of orders from the Supreme Commander.

The 4th ATAF is ready to provide support to part of the forces of the 2nd ATAF as well as to cooperate with the national commands in eliminating enemy airborne landing forces which may have landed in the zone of the lines of communication.

Cooperation with aviation in an operation in the theater is organized especially carefully; for this purpose there are allied joint operations centers which are manned by representatives of the ground forces, air forces and carrier-based aviation.

The commander of the air forces in a theater has his own center for controlling the combat actions of the aviation. Its functions include the overall planning of the employment of the aviation, coordination of the actions of aviation formations in delivering nuclear strikes, and the use of air defense forces and means in organizing cooperation by the aviation when joint operations are carried out with the ground and naval forces.

Control of armed forces in an operation in a theater of military operations. The US and NATO commands attach great significance to questions of the secure, reliable, centralized and fast control of the troops and, first of all, of the missile/nuclear forces.

In the estimation of the NATO Command, the system of operational organs for controlling the armed forces in a theater of military operations must include both peacetime and wartime control posts (mobile, fixed and rear control posts). In addition, the main control post for an operation of the armed forces in a theater must also have a well-equipped mobile control post.

The control of allied armed forces in a theater of military operations is to be organized as follows. When the international situation worsens, a mobile control post is deployed which contains the commander-in-chief and an operations group, while the peacetime control post ceases to function as an operational organ. At the same time another operations group is sent to a fixed control post and readies it to take command of the troops in the event that the mobile control post is put out of action. This control post is considered to be in reserve. The administrative and rear services of the staff of the theater commander-in-chief and representatives of the participating countries and NATO organizations concerned with logistics matters deploy a rear control post.

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The chief of staff of the air forces in the theater remains at the peacetime control post with the requisite number of personnel until notice is given of the hour at which nuclear weapons will be employed; this is done for the purpose of manning the SCARS system (the system for controlling the delivery of nuclear strikes).

Operations at the main control posts are organized in three shifts.

In the Central European Theater of Military Operations all staffs of the branches of the armed forces that are located in their permanent deployment areas are served by the peacetime control posts. These are generally situated in installations of lightweight construction and are not reliably protected against weapons of mass destruction. The fixed control posts are located in underground installations that are protected against nuclear attack. A control post in the Central European Theater of Military Operations can survive following the burst of a one-megaton nuclear bomb at a distance of 600 meters.

The mobile control post for allied armed forces in a given theater is arranged in and transported by 200 transport vehicles and trailers. The mobile control post probably is connected to its sources of communications in the Central European Theater of Military Operations by means of five switching points. The communications equipment of the mobile control post of the armed forces is capable of connecting the post to any of these five points when they are within a distance of 400 kilometers. Approximately one day is required to pack up a mobile control post, move it a distance of 40 to 50 kilometers and deploy it in a new area.

The commands of the army groups deploy temporary, main and alternate command posts for the control of large units and units of the ground forces during wartime.

The temporary command post is used for the control of the troops of an army group until the start of armed conflict. It is deployed in a period when international tension is aggravated.

The main command post of an army group is used to direct the combat actions of the troops in a limited as well as in a general nuclear war.

As a rule the alternate command post of an army group is located a considerable distance from the main command post (up to 120 kilometers) and is kept ready to take over control of the troops.

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In wartime the aviation of an ATAF probably is controlled from main and forward command posts which are located near or with the command posts of the army groups and may be either mobile or fixed.

Allied joint operations centers are formed from representatives of the ATAF's and the army groups to control tactical aviation in the course of an operation conducted by the ground forces. In peacetime they function at reduced strength. An allied joint operations center is deployed at full strength if the international situation worsens.

In recent years the NATO Command has adopted a number of measures aimed at improving the organization of communications and troop control, particularly control of the missile/nuclear forces. A communications system operating on the principle of tropospheric scatter of radiowaves has been introduced; new military cable and radio-relay communications links have been established; new, stable automated on-line enciphering devices and secure telephone devices are being used; the time required for the transmission of alert and warning signals has been reduced; and automated systems for the control of nuclear strike forces (SCARS), tactical aviation (407L) and air defense forces and means (412L) have been introduced.

The NATO Command has developed a special communications system, in addition to the general-purpose system, to support the delivery of nuclear strikes. It may be used in wartime, when an emergency situation develops, and in training exercises.

Two types of telephone-teletype nets have been established in the Central European Theater of Military Operations for the support of nuclear strikes: a net for the transmission of high-priority operational messages, such as the notification of an alert or permission for the partial or general use of nuclear weapons, as well as information nets for the transmission of operational information on the progress of combat actions and the implementation of alert procedures.

Provisions have been made for connecting in the radio of an airborne command post for the NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe to the net used for the support of nuclear strikes.

The communications nets for the support of nuclear strikes use the communications channels of NATO's Ace High tropospheric and radio-relay system in Europe. Cable links and shortwave radio serve as reserve communications means.

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To supplement the ordinary telephone and telegraph nets, the US and NATO commands in Europe have developed an automated system for the control of nuclear means, especially forces on alert, used to deliver nuclear strikes (SCARS). The SCARS system is intended only for the control of units and large units that have been designated according to the plan of the Supreme Commander to deliver nuclear strikes against the nuclear means and control posts of the enemy and to deliver nuclear strikes under the priority regional plans for the theater. The system is capable of providing an almost immediate exchange of data between the operations center of the Supreme Commander and air bases and Mace cruise missile control posts.

The SCARS system is used when there is no advance warning of an enemy attack, or when a warning is received shortly before an attack.

The 407L control system is intended to provide centralized control of the actions of the US and NATO tactical aviation in the Central European Theater of Military Operations when it is necessary to provide close air support to the ground forces and conduct aerial reconnaissance. The 407L system cooperates closely with the 412L system for the control of air defense forces and means. The 407L system is extremely mobile and permits the control of aircraft while they are performing the tasks of close air support of the ground forces to depths up to 200 kilometers. It consists of four subsystems:

- air support, including the air support control centers;
- detection and guidance, including the tactical air control center, warning and guidance posts as well as forward guidance posts;
- air traffic control, including facilities for the control of aircraft on flight routes and near airfields;
- communications, including the communications means of the command posts of air forces large units and tactical air bases.

The overall supervision of the air support subsystem is the responsibility of the directorate of the deputy chief of staff of the US 17th Air Army, which in peacetime is located with this same staff; when an emergency situation arises, its operations groups are established in the air support control centers under the army corps.

Personnel manning the 407L system work in 12-hour shifts with a certain reserve available for three-shift operations.

During operations in the Central European Theater the ground forces probably are controlled by means of a deployed combined system of wire,

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cable, and radio-relay communications with a "grid" type territorial structure. The command posts of the staffs of the army groups and the field armies of army corps, and of divisions, units and subunits of army subordination are connected to this "grid" system. Using this "grid" type of combined communications system, the command of the armed forces in the Central European Theater can have efficient and secure control of the troops to the entire depth of the operational disposition of the troops in an operation in the initial period of a war.

The NATO Command devotes a great deal of attention to the materiel and technical support of operations in the theater. The majority of the NATO countries in the Central European Theater of Military Operations have 30-day reserves of all classes of supplies, while the US, Canada and Luxembourg have 90-day reserves. Up to 30 percent of these reserves are located in the zone of combat actions. The mobile reserve of the covering troops is sufficient for five days, while that of the other troops is sufficient for a period of three to five days. Future plans call for moving supplies to the forward areas and bringing the amount of supplies in the zone of combat actions up to a 30-day level.

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TABLE

Nuclear weapons carriers	Total number	May be used for a nuclear offensive (70 - 90 percent)	May be used for a first massed nuclear strike (70 percent of combat-ready carriers)
Delivery aircraft of tactical aviation	880	616	431
Mace cruise missiles	106	95	95
Operational-tactical missiles of the ground forces	38	34	34
Subtotal	1,024	745	560
Delivery aircraft of strategic aviation	290	203	140
Delivery aircraft of carrier-based aviation	80	56	40
Polaris missiles	48	48	48
Total	1,442	1,052	788

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